

WE CLAIM:

1. An electronic sourcing system comprising:

means for maintaining a catalog database of data relating to catalog items from at least two vendor product catalogs;

means for entering product information that at least partially describes at least one item desired to be requisitioned;

means for searching the catalog database for at least one catalog item from said vendor product catalogs that matches the information for said desired item;

means for building a requisition including an entry for said desired item based upon data obtained from said catalog database relating to the matching catalog item, said data identifying at least a vendor and a vendor catalog number for the matching catalog item; and

means for processing said requisition to generate a purchase order including an entry for an item corresponding to said matching catalog item.

2. The electronic sourcing system of claim 1, wherein said purchase order entry identifies at least said vendor catalog number for said matching catalog item.

3. The electronic sourcing system of claim 1, wherein said requisition building means includes a means for converting said vendor and vendor catalog number into a corresponding other vendor and other vendor catalog number, and wherein said purchase order entry identifies at least said other vendor catalog number for said matching catalog item.

4. A sourcing system comprising:

means for maintaining a catalog database of data relating to catalog items from at least two vendor product catalogs;

means for entering product information that at least partially describes respective first and second items desired to be requisitioned;

means for searching the catalog database for at least first and second catalog items from said vendor product catalogs, each of said first and second catalog items obtained from a different respective one of said first and second vendor product catalogs and matching the information for a different respective one of said first and second desired items;

means for building a requisition including at least first and second entries each for a different respective one of said first and second desired items and based upon data obtained from said catalog database relating to said respective matching catalog item, said data identifying at least a vendor and a vendor catalog number for said respective matching catalog item; and

means for processing said requisition to generate at least first and second purchase orders, each to a different supplier and each including an entry for an item corresponding to a different one of said first and second matching catalog items.

5. The electronic sourcing system of claim 4, wherein at least said first purchase order identifies at least said vendor and vendor catalog number for said first matching catalog item.

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6. The electronic sourcing system of claim 4, wherein said requisition building means includes a means for converting said vendor and vendor catalog number for at least said first matching catalog item into a corresponding other vendor and other vendor catalog number, and wherein at least said first purchase order entry identifies at least said other vendor catalog number for said matching catalog item.

7. The electronic sourcing system of claim 4, wherein said requisition building means includes a means for converting said vendors and vendor catalog numbers for said first and second matching catalog items into corresponding first and second other vendors and first and second other vendor catalog numbers, and wherein the entry of each of said first and second purchase orders respectively identifies at least a different one of said first and second other vendor catalog numbers. *a*

8. An electronic sourcing system comprising:

means for maintaining a catalog database containing data relating to catalog items from at least first and second vendor product catalogs;

means for entering product information that at least partially describes items desired to be requisitioned;

means for searching the catalog database for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that match the product information for said desired items;

means for generating an order list that includes at least one selected matching catalog item;

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means for building a requisition for said desired item using data obtained from said catalog database relating to the matching catalog item on said order list, said data identifying at least the vendor and vendor catalog number for the matching catalog item; and

means for processing said requisition to generate a purchase order including an entry for an item corresponding to said matching catalog item.

9. The electronic sourcing system of claim 8, wherein said purchase order entry identifies at least said vendor catalog number for said matching catalog item. a

10. The electronic sourcing system of claim 8, wherein said requisition building means includes a means for converting said vendor and vendor catalog number into a corresponding other vendor and other vendor catalog number, and wherein said purchase order entry identifies at least said other vendor catalog number for said matching catalog item.

11. An electronic sourcing system comprising:

means for maintaining a catalog database containing data relating to catalog items from at least first and second vendor product catalogs;

means for entering product information that at least partially describes items desired to be requisitioned;

means for searching the catalog database for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that match the product information for said desired items;

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means for generating an order list that includes at least two selected matching catalog items, each from a different one of said vendor product catalogs;

means for building a requisition for said desired items using data obtained from said catalog database relating to the matching catalog items, said data identifying at least the vendors and vendor catalog numbers for the matching catalog items; and

means for processing said requisition to generate at least one purchase order including an entry for an item corresponding to at least one of said matching catalog items.

12. The electronic sourcing system of claim 11, wherein said purchase order entry identifies at least said vendor catalog number for said matching catalog item.

13. The electronic sourcing system of claim 11, wherein said requisition building means includes a means for converting said vendor and vendor catalog number into a corresponding other vendor and other vendor catalog number, and wherein said purchase order entry identifies at least said other vendor catalog number for said matching catalog item.

14. An electronic sourcing system comprising:

means for maintaining a catalog database containing data relating to catalog items from at least first and second vendor product catalogs;

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means for entering product information that at least partially describes items desired to be requisitioned;

means for searching the catalog database for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that match the product information for said desired items;

means for generating an order list that includes at least first and second selected matching catalog items, each from a different one of said vendor product catalogs;

means for building a requisition for said desired items using data obtained from said catalog database relating to said matching catalog items, said data identifying at least the vendors and vendor catalog numbers for the matching catalog items; and

means for processing said requisition to generate at least one purchase order including at least first and second entries for items each respectively corresponding to a different one of said first and second matching catalog items.

15. The electronic sourcing system of claim 14, wherein at least said first one of said purchase order entries identifies at least said vendor catalog number for said first matching catalog item.

16. The electronic sourcing system of claim 15, wherein said second one of said purchase order entries identifies at least said vendor catalog number for said second matching catalog item.

17. The electronic sourcing system of claim 14, wherein said requisition building means includes a

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means for converting said vendors and vendor catalog numbers into corresponding other vendors and other vendor catalog numbers, and wherein at least one of said purchase order entries identifies at least one of said other vendor catalog numbers for one of said matching catalog item.

18. An electronic sourcing system comprising:

means for maintaining a catalog database containing data relating to catalog items from at least first and second vendor product catalogs;

means for entering product information that at least partially describes items desired to be requisitioned;

means for searching the catalog database for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that match the product information for said desired items;

means for generating an order list that includes at least two selected matching catalog items, each from a different one of said vendor product catalogs;

means for building a requisition for said desired items using data obtained from said catalog database relating to the matching catalog items, said data identifying at least the vendors and vendor catalog numbers for the matching catalog items; and

means for processing said requisition to generate at least two purchase orders, each including an entry for an item corresponding to a different one of said matching catalog items.

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19. The electronic sourcing system of claim 18, wherein said entry of at least one of said two purchase orders identifies at least said vendor catalog number for said first matching catalog item.

20. The electronic sourcing system of claim 19, wherein said entry of at least the other of said two purchase orders identifies at least said vendor catalog number for said second matching catalog item.

21. The electronic sourcing system of claim 18, wherein said requisition building means includes a means for converting said vendors and vendor catalog numbers into corresponding other vendors and other vendor catalog numbers, and wherein at least said entry for at least one of said two purchase orders identifies at least one of said other vendor catalog numbers for one of said matching catalog items. *a*

22. An electronic sourcing system comprising:

means for maintaining a catalog database containing data relating to catalog items from at least first and second vendor product catalogs;

means for entering product information that at least partially describes a first item desired to be requisitioned;

means for searching the catalog database for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that match the product information for said first desired item, and for selecting a matching catalog item from one of said catalogs;

means for subsequently entering product information that at least partially describes a second desired item to be requisitioned;

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means for maintaining a catalog database containing data relating to catalog items from at least first and second vendor product catalogs;

means for entering product information that at least partially describes a first item desired to be requisitioned;

means for searching the catalog database for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that match the product information for said first desired item, and for selecting a matching catalog item from one of said catalogs;

means for subsequently entering product information that at least partially describes a second desired item to be requisitioned;

means for searching the catalog database for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that match the product information for said second desired item, and for selecting a matching catalog item from another one of said catalogs;

means for building a requisition for said desired items using data obtained from said catalog database relating to the selected matching catalog items, said data identifying at least the vendors and vendor catalog numbers for the selected matching catalog items; and

means for processing said requisition to generate at least one purchase order including at least first and second entries for items each respectively corresponding to a different one of said matching catalog items.

26. The electronic sourcing system of claim 25, wherein said requisition building means includes a means for converting said vendors and vendor catalog numbers into corresponding other vendors and other vendor catalog numbers, and wherein at least one of said entries of said purchase order identifies at least

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27. An electronic sourcing system comprising:

means for entering product information  
that at least partially describes a first item desired  
to be requisitioned;

means for searching the catalog database for first catalog items, from at least one of said vendor product catalogs, that match the product information for said first desired item;

means for generating an order list that includes a selected one of said first matching catalog items from said one catalog;

means for subsequently entering product information that at least partially describes a second desired item to be requisitioned;

means for searching the catalog database for second catalog items, from another one of said vendor product catalogs, that match the product information for said second desired item;

means for adding to said order list a selected one of said second matching catalog items from said other one of said catalogs;

means for building a requisition for said desired items using data obtained from said catalog database relating to the selected first and second matching catalog items on said order list, said data identifying at least the vendors and vendor catalog numbers for said matching catalog items; and

means for generating an order list that includes at least two selected matching catalog items, each from a different one of said vendor product catalogs;

means for processing said requisition to generate at least two purchase orders, each including an entry for an item corresponding to a different one of said matching catalog items.

means for maintaining a catalog database containing data including descriptive information relating to catalog items from at least first and second vendor product catalogs;

means for searching the catalog database  
for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs  
that match the product information for said desired  
item;

means for selectively viewing the  
catalog segments identified by said hit list;

means for generating an order list of  
desired items at least one of which is a desired  
catalog item selected from a catalog segment identified  
by said hit list;

means for processing said requisition to generate at least one purchase order including entries for items corresponding to said desired items, at least one of said entries corresponding to said matching catalog item.

33. The electronic sourcing system of claim 31, wherein said requisition building means includes a means for converting said vendor and vendor catalog number into a corresponding other vendor and other vendor catalog number, and wherein said purchase order entry identifies at least said other vendor catalog number for said matching catalog item.

means for maintaining a catalog database  
of data relating to catalog items from at least one  
vendor product catalog;

means for entering product information  
that at least partially describes at least one item  
desired to be requisitioned;

means for searching the catalog database for at least one catalog item from said vendor product catalog that matches the information for said desired item;

means for building a requisition including an entry for said desired item based upon data obtained from said catalog database relating to the matching catalog item, said data identifying at least a vendor catalog number for the matching catalog item; and

means for determining that an item corresponding to the desired matching catalog item is available in inventory, and for processing said requisition to generate a purchase order including an entry identifying said inventory item.

35. The electronic sourcing system of claim 34, wherein said purchase order entry identifies said vendor catalog number for said item in inventory.

36. The electronic sourcing system of claim 34, wherein said requisition building means includes a means for converting said vendor and vendor catalog number into a corresponding other vendor and other vendor catalog number, and wherein said purchase order entry identifies said other vendor catalog number for said item in inventory.

37. An electronic sourcing system comprising:

means for maintaining a catalog database of at least two vendor product catalogs;

means for searching the catalog database for catalog items, and for selecting at least one catalog item located as a result of the search;

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means for generating a requisition including at least one requisitioned item;

means for communicating said selected catalog item to said requisition generating means; and

means responsive to said requisition for generating a purchase order including an entry corresponding to said selected catalog item.

38. An electronic sourcing system comprising:

means for maintaining a catalog database of at least two vendor product catalogs;

means for searching the catalog database for catalog items and for selecting at least two catalog items located as a result of the search, each of said two catalog items coming from a different one of said vendor product catalogs;

means for generating a requisition including at least two requisitioned items;

means for communicating said selected catalog items to said requisition generating means; and

means responsive to said requisition for generating a purchase order including at least two entries, each for an item corresponding to a different one of said selected matching catalog items.

39. An electronic sourcing system comprising:

a requisition management system capable of generating a requisition for at least one requisitioned item;

a computer maintaining a catalog database including at least two vendor product catalogs;

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means for searching the catalog database for at least one desired catalog item;

means for selecting said desired catalog item, and for communicating data representative of said item to said requisition management system;

means associated with said requisition management system and responsive to said communicated data for generating said requisition including an entry corresponding to said desired catalog item;

means associated with said requisition management system for determining the availability in different inventory locations of said requisitioned desired catalog item; and

means responsive to said determining means for issuing a purchase order for said requisitioned desired catalog item from an inventory location including said catalog item.

40. A sourcing method comprising the steps of:

maintaining a catalog database of data relating to catalog items from at least two vendor product catalogs;

entering product information that at least partially describes at least one item desired to be requisitioned;

searching the catalog database for at least one catalog item from said vendor product catalogs that matches the information for said desired item;

building a requisition including an entry for said desired item based upon data obtained from said catalog database relating to the matching catalog item, said data identifying at least a vendor

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and a vendor catalog number for the matching catalog item; and

processing said requisition to generate a purchase order including an entry for an item corresponding to said matching catalog item.

41. The sourcing method of claim 40, wherein said purchase order entry identifies at least said vendor catalog number for said matching catalog item.

42. The sourcing method of claim 40, wherein said requisition building step includes converting said vendor and vendor catalog number into a corresponding other vendor and other vendor catalog number, and wherein said purchase order entry identifies at least said other vendor catalog number for said matching catalog item.

43. A sourcing method comprising the steps of:

maintaining a catalog database of data relating to catalog items from at least two vendor product catalogs;

entering product information that at least partially describes respective first and second items desired to be requisitioned;

searching the catalog database for at least first and second catalog items from said vendor product catalogs, each of said first and second catalog items obtained from a different respective one of said first and second vendor product catalogs and matching the information for a different respective one of said first and second desired items;

building a requisition including at least first and second entries each for a different

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44. The sourcing method of claim 43, wherein at least said first purchase order identifies at least said vendor and vendor catalog number for said first matching catalog item.

45. The sourcing method of claim 43, wherein said requisition building step includes converting said vendor and vendor catalog number for at least said first matching catalog item into a corresponding other vendor and other vendor catalog number, and wherein at least said first purchase order entry identifies at least said other vendor catalog number for said matching catalog item.

46. The sourcing method of claim 43, wherein said requisition building step includes converting said vendors and vendor catalog numbers for said first and second matching catalog items into corresponding first and second other vendors and first and second other vendor catalog numbers, and wherein the entry of each of said first and second purchase orders respectively identifies at least a different one of said first and second other vendor catalog numbers.



maintaining a catalog database containing data relating to catalog items from at least first and second vendor product catalogs;

entering product information that at least partially describes items desired to be requisitioned;

searching the catalog database for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that match the product information for said desired items; generating an order list that includes at least two selected matching catalog items, each from a different one of said vendor product catalogs;

building a requisition for said desired items using data obtained from said catalog database relating to the matching catalog items, said data identifying at least the vendors and vendor catalog numbers for the matching catalog items; and

processing said requisition to generate at least one purchase order including an entry for an item corresponding to at least one of said matching catalog items.

51. The sourcing method of claim 50, wherein said purchase order entry identifies at least said vendor catalog number for said matching catalog item.

52. The sourcing method of claim 50, wherein said requisition building step includes converting said vendor and vendor catalog number into a corresponding other vendor and other vendor catalog number, and wherein said purchase order entry identifies at least said other vendor catalog number for said matching catalog item.

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maintaining a catalog database  
containing data relating to catalog items from at least  
first and second vendor product catalogs;

entering product information that at least partially describes items desired to be requisitioned;

searching the catalog database for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that match the product information for said desired items; generating an order list that includes at least first and second selected matching catalog items, each from a different one of said vendor product catalogs;

building a requisition for said desired items using data obtained from said catalog database relating to said matching catalog items, said data identifying at least the vendors and vendor catalog numbers for the matching catalog items; and

processing said requisition to generate at least one purchase order including at least first and second entries for items each respectively corresponding to a different one of said first and second matching catalog items.

54. The sourcing method of claim 53, wherein at least said first one of said purchase order entries identifies at least said vendor catalog number for said first matching catalog item.

55. The sourcing method of claim 54, wherein said second one of said purchase order entries identifies at least said vendor catalog number for said second matching catalog item.

57. A sourcing method comprising the steps of:

entering product information that at least partially describes items desired to be requisitioned;

building a requisition for said desired items using data obtained from said catalog database relating to the matching catalog items, said data identifying at least the vendors and vendor catalog numbers for the matching catalog items; and

58. The sourcing method of claim 57, wherein said entry of at least one of said two purchase orders

identifies at least said vendor catalog number for said first matching catalog item.

59. The sourcing method of claim 58, wherein said entry of at least the other of said two purchase orders identifies at least said vendor catalog number for said second catalog item.

60. The sourcing method of claim 57, wherein said requisition building step includes converting said vendors and vendor catalog numbers into corresponding other vendors and other vendor catalog numbers, and wherein at least said entry for at least one of said two purchase orders identifies at least one of said other vendor catalog numbers for one of said matching catalog items.

61. A sourcing method comprising the steps of:

- maintaining a catalog database containing data relating to catalog items from at least first and second vendor product catalogs;
- entering product information that at least partially describes a first item desired to be requisitioned;
- searching the catalog database for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that match the product information for said first desired item, and for selecting a matching catalog item from one of said catalogs;
- subsequently entering product information that at least partially describes a second desired item to be requisitioned;
- searching the catalog database for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that

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match the product information for said second desired item, and for selecting a matching catalog item from another one of said catalogs;

building a requisition for said desired items using data obtained from said catalog database relating to the selected matching catalog items, said data identifying at least the vendors and vendor catalog numbers for the selected matching catalog items; and

processing said requisition to generate a plurality of purchase orders, each including an entry for an item corresponding to a different one of said matching catalog items.

62. The sourcing method of claim 61, wherein said entry for at least one of said purchase orders identifies at least said vendor catalog number for one of said matching catalog items.

63. The sourcing method of claim 61, wherein said requisition building step includes converting said vendors and vendor catalog numbers into corresponding other vendors and other vendor catalog numbers, and wherein said entry for at least one of said two purchase orders identifies at least one of said other vendor catalog numbers for one of said matching catalog items.

64. A sourcing method comprising the steps of:

maintaining a catalog database containing data relating to catalog items from at least first and second vendor product catalogs;

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entering product information that at least partially describes a first item desired to be requisitioned;

searching the catalog database for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that match the product information for said first desired item, and for selecting a matching catalog item from one of said catalogs;

subsequently entering product information that at least partially describes a second desired item to be requisitioned;

searching the catalog database for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that match the product information for said second desired item, and for selecting a matching catalog item from another one of said catalogs;

building a requisition for said desired items using data obtained from said catalog database relating to the selected matching catalog items, said data identifying at least the vendors and vendor catalog numbers for the selected matching catalog items; and

processing said requisition to generate at least one purchase order including at least first and second entries for items each respectively corresponding to a different one of said matching catalog items. *a*

65. The sourcing method claim 64, wherein said requisition building step includes converting said vendors and vendor catalog numbers into corresponding other vendors and other vendor catalog numbers, and wherein at least one of said entries of said purchase order identifies at least one of said other vendor catalog numbers for one of said matching catalog items.

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processing said requisition to generate a plurality of purchase orders, each including an entry

for an item corresponding to a different one of said first and second matching catalog items.

67. The sourcing method of claim 66, wherein said entry for at least one of said purchase orders identifies at least said vendor catalog number for one of said matching catalog items.

68. The sourcing method system of claim 66, wherein said requisition building step includes converting said vendors and vendor catalog numbers into corresponding other vendors and other vendor catalog numbers, and wherein said entry for at least one of said two purchase orders identifies at least one of said other vendor catalog numbers for one of said matching catalog items.

69. An sourcing method comprising the steps of:

maintaining a catalog database containing data relating to catalog items from at least first and second vendor product catalogs;

entering product information that at least partially describes items desired to be requisitioned;

searching the catalog database for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that match the product information for said desired items;

generating an order list that includes at least two selected matching catalog items, each from a different one of said vendor product catalogs;

building a requisition for said desired items using data obtained from said catalog database relating to the matching catalog items, said data

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identifying at least the vendors and vendor catalog numbers for the matching catalog items; and

processing said requisition to generate at least two purchase orders, each including an entry for an item corresponding to a different one of said matching catalog items.

70. A sourcing method comprising the steps of:

maintaining a catalog database containing data including descriptive information relating to catalog items from at least first and second vendor product catalogs;

entering product information that at least partially describes an item desired to be requisitioned;

searching the catalog database for catalog items from said vendor product catalogs that match the product information for said desired item;

generating a hit list of catalog segments identifying items, from at least one of said vendor product catalogs, that match the product information;

selectively viewing the catalog segments identified by said hit list;

generating an order list of desired items at least one of which is a desired catalog item selected from a catalog segment identified by said hit list;

building a requisition for said order list of desired items using, for said desired catalog item, data obtained from said catalog database relating to the desired catalog item, said data identifying at least the vendor and vendor catalog number for the desired catalog item; and

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processing said requisition to generate at least one purchase order including entries for items corresponding to said desired items, at least one of said entries corresponding to said matching catalog item.

71. The sourcing method of claim 70, wherein said purchase order entry identifies at least said vendor catalog number for said matching catalog item.

72. The sourcing method of claim 70, wherein said requisition building step includes converting said vendor and vendor catalog number into a corresponding other vendor and other vendor catalog number, and wherein said purchase order entry identifies at least said other vendor catalog number for said matching catalog item.

73. A sourcing method comprising the steps of:

maintaining a catalog database of data relating to catalog items from at least one vendor product catalog;

entering product information that at least partially describes at least one item desired to be requisitioned;

searching the catalog database for at least one catalog item from said vendor product catalog that matches the information for said desired item;

building a requisition including an entry for said desired item based upon data obtained from said catalog database relating to the matching catalog item, said data identifying at least a vendor catalog number for the matching catalog item; and

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determining that an item corresponding to the desired matching catalog item is available in inventory, and for processing said requisition to generate a purchase order including an entry identifying said inventory item.

74. The sourcing method of claim 73, wherein said purchase order entry identifies said vendor catalog number for said item in inventory.

75. The sourcing method of claim 73, wherein said requisition building step includes converting said vendor and vendor catalog number into a corresponding other vendor and other vendor catalog number, and wherein said purchase order entry identifies said other vendor catalog number for said item in inventory.

76. A sourcing method comprising the steps of:

maintaining a catalog database of at least two vendor product catalogs;  
searching the catalog database for catalog items;  
selecting at least one catalog item located as a result of the search;  
generating a requisition including at least said catalog item as one requisitioned item;  
generating, from said requisition, a purchase including an entry corresponding to said selected catalog item.

77. A sourcing method comprising the steps of:

maintaining a catalog database of at least two vendor product catalogs;

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searching the catalog database for catalog items and for selecting at least two catalog items located as a result of the search, each of said two catalog items coming from a different one of said vendor product catalogs;

generating, responsive to said requisition, a purchase order including at least two entries, each for an item corresponding to a different one of said selected matching catalog items.

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maintaining on a computer a catalog database including at least two vendor product catalogs;

searching said catalog database for at least one desired catalog item;

selecting said desired catalog item;

generating a requisition including an entry corresponding to said desired catalog item;

determining the availability in  
different inventory locations of said requisitioned  
desired catalog item; and

responsive to determining that said catalog item is available in at least one of said inventory locations, issuing a purchase order for said requisitioned desired catalog item from that inventory location.

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